

# Young heavyweight to go for his first career belt in state championship

**B**AY AREA BOXING fans who are searching for a new, young heavyweight contender might not have to travel far.

On Friday night at the San Francisco Concourse (620 7th St.), **Javier Mora** tries to win the first belt of his career, the state heavyweight championship.

Mora faces **Charles Wilson** (8-5) in an eight-rounder to decide the new champ. But more than the state title, the fight might give an indication whether Mora can advance into the upper echelon of the division.

Only 21, he has put together a 16-0 record with 14 knockouts. At 6-foot-2, 240 pounds, he has the size and strength to match up with the bigger brand of heavyweights who are dominating the scene these days.

“I’m a guy who packs a punch ... know what I mean?”



**JAY HEATER**

Boxing

said Mora, whose fights have been either in Orange County or Fresno so far. “I’m a boxer and a brawler. Hey, it’s kind of hard to talk about yourself. But I think people like to watch me fight. I’m an exciting fighter.”

San Francisco promoter **Peter Howes** was looking for an exciting fighter to headline Friday’s card, which won’t be televised. He went to Mora’s co-managers **Mike Jacoby** and **Norman Kaplan**, who wanted to move their fighter up to an eight-rounder. “It was very important for Javier to make the jump to an eight-rounder,” Jacoby said. “Plus, Peter Howes

has a reputation as a first-class promoter.

“People in San Francisco are going to see a fighter who can stop a guy with either hand. He is very aggressive and heavy handed.”

Although most of the ranked heavyweights are nearing the end of their careers, Mora said he is not going to hurry. “I want to take my time because I know I’m not there yet,” he said. “Heavyweights mature later. I think I’m doing it the right way.”

He said he expects a tough fight from Wilson. “He is a guy who comes to fight,” said Mora, who was offered football scholarships out of Westminster High School but pursued boxing instead. “He’s been in with some good guys and he is a proven puncher.”

The fight card begins at 6:30 p.m. Tickets (\$65 through \$25) are available at 415-392-4400

or at [www.tickets.com](http://www.tickets.com).

**VERNON SPEAKS:** WBC welterweight champ **Vernon Forrest** is not very pleased with promoter **Bob Arum**’s comment that Forrest doesn’t have the exposure to make a fight against **Oscar De La Hoya** a reality at this point. After De La Hoya’s win over **Fernando Vargas**, Arum said he would like Forrest to face a few highly-ranked Hispanic fighters to build interest.

“That is one of the most ridiculous things that I have ever heard,” said Forrest, who would move up to 154 to face De La Hoya. “It is really just another excuse not to fight me. That insult alone is an insult to the great Hispanic boxing fans around the world. It implies that Hispanic boxing fans only know Hispanic fighters or guys who fight Hispanic fighters, so that was ridiculous and borderline racist.”

Forrest said the public would buy the fight right now if it was offered. “I am more popular than (Arum) might give me credit for. I am more popular than all of his Mexican fighters other than De La Hoya. I am going to continue to fight the best fighters out there and I am not going to let one particular fight impede what I am going to do.”

Forrest’s management team of **Al Haymon** and **Charles Watson** is planning for a Jan. 25 return to the ring in Atlanta, San Diego or Las Vegas. The opponent for the first of Forrest’s six-fight deal with HBO has yet to be decided. Forrest said he is very interested in unifying the welterweight title by facing either WBA champ **Ricardo Mayorga** or IBF champ **Michele Piccirillo**.

One thing Forrest won’t do is move up to 154 unless he is fighting for either a title or a

huge payday. “At one point in my career, I wanted to fight at junior middleweight and middleweight and I was willing to go all the way up to light heavyweight or even cruiserweight. But it took me so long to get in the position that I am in, that I have no desire to do that anymore. It took me 10 years to get to where I am, the man, the champion. I like being the champion.”

**PRO SCENE:** **Juan Gomez-Trinidad**, the cousin of **Felix Trinidad**, will face **Raul Balbi** of Argentina on the undercard of the **Paul Spadafora-Dennis Holbaek** pay-per-view card on Nov. 9 in Chester, W.Va. Trinidad, of Puerto Rico, is 22-2 and ranked No. 7 at lightweight by the WBA. Balbi (48-6-1) is coming off two losses to **Leonard Dorin**.

Contact Jay Heater at [jheater@cctimes.com](mailto:jheater@cctimes.com).